

At-a-Glance: Initial School Budget Allocations

What Drives the Amount of Money DCPS Provides to All Schools?

DCPS determines the amount of money it may allocate to all schools after considering the amount of revenues and the costs it can anticipate for the next school year. The allocation to schools includes the following:

- **Local Funds.** The largest component of the DCPS budget is the portion we receive from the District of Columbia, or “local funds.” The amount DCPS receives is determined by the number of students who attend DCPS and the amount of funding per student the District provides. That number also includes funding for students identified as special education or ELL and for summer school programs. DCPS’ projected enrollment for FY 12 has increased to 47,247 students. The Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF), the amount of local funding DCPS receives for each student, is \$8,945, the same amount provided at the start of this school year. We anticipate that total local funds for FY 12 from the UPSFF will be approximately \$612 million, compared to \$564 million at the start of FY 11. This increase reflects the growth in our student enrollment as well as an increase in certain funding for special education programs.
- **Inflation and Other Costs.** The cost to provide the same level of service and staff we provided to schools in FY 11 has increased by nearly \$23 million in FY 12. The increase reflects the costs associated with salary and step increases for WTU members and increases in health care costs for all employees. The average teacher cost has increased by \$5,606 from the FY 11 actual of \$85,075 to \$90,681.
- **Federal Payment.** DCPS also projects to lose \$18.5 million in federal payment funds, a special allocation provided annually by Congress, in FY 12.

Emphasis on Early Childhood

We continue to expand the number of preschool and prekindergarten classrooms throughout DCPS as a cornerstone of our effort to increase student enrollment. We have seen the positive impact: Enrollment is up for the first time in 41 years. And we will continue to see the benefits of this work for years to come.

However, there are costs associated with this effort. Early Childhood classrooms are staffed at a lower, more costly, teacher-to-student ratio with an additional educational aide. Lower-enrollment schools with large Early Childhood programs often draw resources from our larger middle and high schools.

Overall Impact of Small Schools and Specialty Programs

DCPS has a long, established culture and a system of small neighborhood schools and specialty programs designed to improve student achievement. Currently, DCPS operates more than 40 schools with fewer than 300 students each.

These schools have difficulty generating the revenue necessary to support a comprehensive academic and social-support program for students because of low enrollment. Specialty programs historically have received additional allocations to support their unique curricular offerings.

The ultimate result is these schools are often subsidized by funds that otherwise would be generated by the enrollment of larger schools.

Summary of Changes

While additional funds provided by the mayor's office will spare some cuts, some changes will be necessary to operate within a balanced budget and all schools will be affected.

Changes to FY 12 School Staffing Allocations				
	Is My School Impacted by the Change?			
Change	Elementary School	CSM-Full Schools	Middle School	High School
Increase in Average Teacher Salary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change in Staffing Allocation for Special Education Coordinators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Loss of Allocation for Information Technology Position	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Loss of Allocation for Guidance Counselor	No	Yes	No	No
Loss of Allocation for Psychologist	No	Yes	No	No
Reduce Allocation for Instructional Coach from 2 to 1	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change Allocation for Assistant Principals	No	Yes	No	No
Reduce Non-Personnel Spending Allocation from 4% to 3.5%	No	Yes	No	No
Increase Staffing Allocation for teacher from 1:20 to 1:22	No	No	No	Yes

How Did You Calculate My School's Allocation?

Addressing the Needs of Individual Schools

One of the challenges in the budget development process is ensuring that the needs of individual schools are being met within the DCPS budget development process. No two schools serve the exact same population. Even if the schools have the same number of students, a variety of factors affect the allocation from which a school can build its budget. Those factors include the number of special needs students a school serves or the number of Early Childhood programs it offers. If those numbers change, the budget allocation also changes.

DCPS accounts for the following when calculating initial school budget allocations:

- Projected Student Enrollment;
- Special Education Student Population;
- English Language Learner (ELL) Student Population;
- Number of Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) Forms Submitted;
- School Configuration (Elementary School, K-8 Model School, Middle School, or High School);
- School Size;
- Teacher-to-Student Ratios by Grade Configurations;
- Specialty School Status; and
- Designation within Comprehensive Staffing Model (CSM).

Projected Student Enrollment

Projected student enrollment is the primary driver of your school's initial budget allocation. Projected student enrollment is determined by analyzing the past four years of enrollment data by school to estimate enrollment for the upcoming school year. Projections also take into account more nontraditional factors that can significantly affect enrollment, such as school closures and spikes in the birth rate. The complete instructions for determining a projection in the DCPS FY 12 Budget Guide can be found on our website.

In December, projections were delivered to principals for review. Once received, principals accepted or petitioned their projection based on evidence of enrollment. Petitions were granted based on the quality of evidence.

Schools that are projected to lose significant numbers of students are likely to see similar reductions to school allocations.

Special Education Student Population

Staffing for the special education student population is determined by a review of all current Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Staffing for these needs is guided by the Office of Special Education (OSE) staffing ratios and also can be found in the DCPS FY 12 Budget Guide on our website. Funds are then allocated according to the given ratios. For example, schools that have 10 students with full-time IEPs in kindergarten through grade 8 will receive funds for one full-time Special Education Teacher. Schools are not able to repurpose funds designed to support Special Education needs.

English Language Learner Student Population

English Language Learner (ELL) student population support needs also are determined by a review of the number of ELL students currently enrolled and their classification (Level I through Level IV). Staffing for ELL students is guided by the Office of Bilingual Education (OBE) staffing ratios. Funds are then allocated according to the given ratios. For example, schools that have 22 students between Level I and Level IV in kindergarten through grade 8 will receive funds for one full-time Bilingual/ELL Teacher. Schools are not able to repurpose funds designed to support ELL needs.

Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) Forms Submitted

The number of students at a school who have submitted their Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) form has a direct impact on the amount of "Title funds" that the school receives in its initial budget allocation. "Title funds" refers to money provided by the U.S. Department of Education through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. These funds are divided into two categories: Title I and Title II. Title I funds provide support for students from low-income families and are subsequently tied to the successful submission of a completed Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) form. A small percentage of Title I funds are set aside to fund parent engagement initiatives at the school level. Title II funds are designed to support professional development for educators.

School Grade Configuration

The grade configuration of your school will impact the allocation it receives. Teacher-to-student ratios or staffing allocations are often different for elementary, middle and high schools. Within that designation are specific rules that are unique to elementary schools and will affect the allocation. For example, the teacher-to-student ratio at the preschool and pre-K levels is lower (fewer students to a teacher) than the teacher-to-student ratios in more advanced grades. An elementary school with a large number of preschool and pre-K students will therefore receive a higher allocation than a school without preschool or pre-K (such as a middle school) because more teachers are needed to meet given teacher-to-student ratios.

We have changed the staffing ratio from 1:20 to 1:22 (teachers to students) at the high school level. While increased, the high school ratios are still below those for grades 3-5 which remains at 1:25. Middle school allocations remain at 1:20.

School Enrollment Size

Your school's enrollment size will impact your school allocation. Often, schools with low enrollment are subsidized by schools with larger enrollment numbers as the enrollment of smaller schools does not generate sufficient funds to support a full complement of programming. To offset the burden on larger schools, we often increase the enrollment threshold at smaller schools.

Similarly, schools with large enrollment numbers often spend far less per student than schools with lower enrollment, in part because funding generated by the larger school is often redirected to support the small schools. At large schools where the per-pupil spending dropped below \$8,400, DCPS has provided additional funds to maintain a more equitable level of student funding.

Specialty Schools

Currently, five schools within DCPS receive "non-formula funds," or specialty funds that promote the unique goals of their program. For example the Ellington School for the Arts uses its non-formula funds to sustain a dual-curriculum that provides general studies and arts-intensive classes. Non-formula funds are included in the initial school budget allocations for these programs.

Schools Receiving Specialty Funds	Total Non-Formula
Ballou SHS	\$947,000
Banneker SHS	\$690,480
Ellington School of the Arts	\$2,180,709
McKinley Technology HS	\$1,680,585
School Without Wall SHS	\$495,436

CSM-Full Schools

Over the past three years, DCPS has designated 30 schools as "receiving," or CSM-Full, schools. The designation as a CSM-Full school entitled the school to more positions (i.e., psychologists, additional instructional coaches) and lower staffing ratios than other schools (CSM-Standard schools).

CSM-Full Schools	
Elementary Schools/Education Campuses	Amidon ES, Brightwood EC, Brookland EC, Bruce-Monroe EC, Cleveland ES, H.D. Cooke ES, Emery EC, Ferebee-Hope ES, Francis-Stevens EC, Hendley ES, Browne EC, Burroughs EC, LaSalle-Backus EC, Leckie ES, Moten @ Wilkinson ES, Patterson ES, Plummer ES, Powell ES, Raymond ES, Smothers ES, Truesdell EC, Tubman ES, Turner ES, Walker-Jones EC, Whittier EC
Middle Schools	Eliot-Hine MS, Hart MS, MacFarland MS, Ronald Brown MS, Shaw MS

The rationale for the distinction was that CSM-Full schools were identified to receive students from schools that were closed over the past three years. The enhanced staffing was designed to support the transition from closed

schools and ensure that the receiving schools (as opposed to the often smaller closed school) were able to offer the full complement of programming (art, music and physical education) as well as wrap-around services that we deemed important for student growth.

In many cases, the need for these wrap-around services has diminished and schools have emerged as one community. As such, the budgets of the CSM-Full schools will be funded at nearly the same level as all other schools. In this year's allocation, the CSM-Full schools will often see what appears to be a dramatic reduction in staffing compared to the positions they now have. The reduction now aligns their budget allocations with those of all other schools.

Per Student Minimum Funding

The cost of maintaining lower-enrollment schools and expanding early childhood programs often falls disproportionately on our larger-enrollment schools. The cost is reflected in the fact that our largest schools spend the least per student. Without any adjustment, these larger schools lose funding while they are gaining in their overall enrollment. We identified all schools that were funding at less than \$8,400 and added funds to restore their per pupil spending to \$8,400. Even with the adjustment, these large-enrollment schools spend the least per student.